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DESIGN

DESIGN

BY

CHARLES H. HOWARD

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DISCARDED

INTRODUCTION

"PATTERN, Proportion, Profile"—these are the words constantly repeated by an eminent teacher of design, and indeed they come straight to the point, for in them are embodied the three underlying requirements of all good design: pattern, the repetition of spaces; proportion, the relation in size of those spaces to one another; profile, the line, or edge, of those spaces. The pattern gives a certain character to a design by its insistence or its restraint (much repetition gives a monotonous impression; little repetition an air of subtlety.) Proportion makes a design either heavy or light (much black is heavy; much white is light). Profile or "line" shows light sprightliness, preciseness, rough boldness or solid sureness, depending upon the stroke used with the pen or the brush. When those three elements—pattern, proportion, profile—are "just" (which implies appropriateness and simplicity), the design will be good.

In design, lines and forms convey different emotions, or as is more commonly said, have different "feeling." For example, a series of straight lines leaning to the left on a page leads the eye of the observer to the left, and a triangle on its base gives one a feeling of security and solidity. A circle is soft. Saw-teeth on edge have an aggressive, soldier-like feeling. A wavy line is as indeterminate and unstable as the sea. A square is stolid, unemotional, and unquestionable.

Design from earliest days has been founded upon natural forms. In the old Orient, in Egypt of thirty and more centuries ago, in ancient Greece, in the centuries of the Crusades and the Renaissance when Western Europe was adapting the lost arts of Athens and Rome and finding inspiration in Mussulman Asia Minor, and now in our modern day the natural forms of the skies, the earth and the waters have been the basis and the guiding motif of design. Birds, fish, insects, reptiles, trees, leaves, flowers, stars, clouds, waves and many other motifs can be found in the designs of every race. Sometimes they have been made realistic; sometimes "stylized"; but always underneath there was the same basic motif. Method of employment and nature of "stylization" alone has changed, and this "stylization" has been a manifestation of racial character and era of development rather than a desire to change from old motifs to new.

Change in the "feeling" of a motif (not change in the motif itself) has been due, too, to the change in the requirements of a design. This is appropriateness. Pottery these days is quite different in size, shape and execution from the pottery used in Pericles' Athens. The "feeling" of design has had to change with these requirements in order to maintain a just relation of appropriateness. Today we have wall-papers, linoleums, embroideries, textiles far more complicated than the equiva-

lent articles of a by-gone age when these objects were made roughly by hand.

The procedure in making a design is, first, to lay out loosely in pencil the general form of the design, relating the main masses one to another. In this preliminary sketch pay most attention to *form* rather than to execution. A well laid-out design is much more likely to finish successfully than one inadequately sketched and at the end "fixed up."

The next step is to draw in with pencil the whole design, superficial ornament and all. During this step, the form and proportion well worked out, the designer can devote his whole attention to the pattern. He can make his design as "full" or as empty, as complicated or as simple as he has need, and the main form will always remain intact.

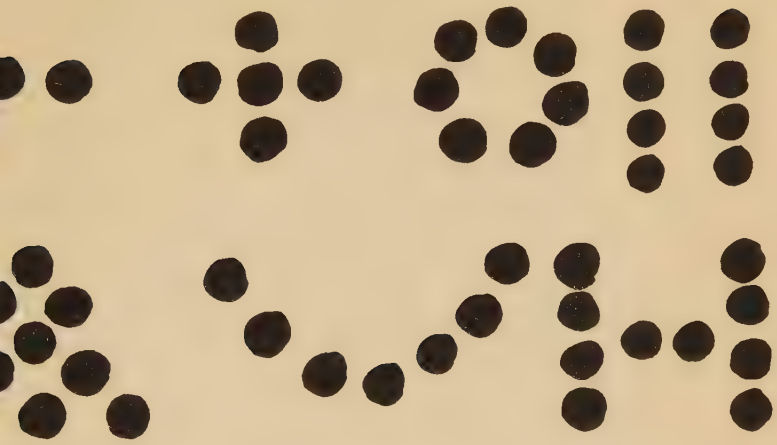
The final step is the inking in, when all attention should be devoted to profile, or "line." The ultimate character of the design should be definitely chosen: rough, precise, nervous, solidly sure. Then this type of line should be maintained throughout. To mix two or more types of line is to weaken the design in such a manner that neither the form nor the pattern can show its worth.

Above all, in making a design, be original. This does not necessarily mean: be eccentric. It means: understand what your design will be used for; select an appropriate motif; then, go ahead boldly with your design in the way that you would like to see it. Do not

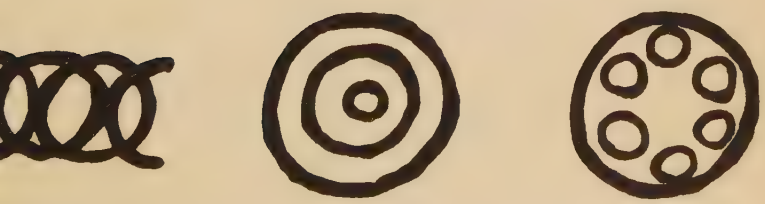
copy. Another designer's work is the way he looks at things. Your work is the way you look at things. Nothing can ever be copied absolutely accurately, and just in that margin lies the charm or the inadequacy of a design. To copy is to be sterile. To originate is to create. The designs in this volume are meant only as suggestions to beginners. They are simple, and show how easy the execution of design really is. They are merely guides. The real design will come from you alone.

PATTERN

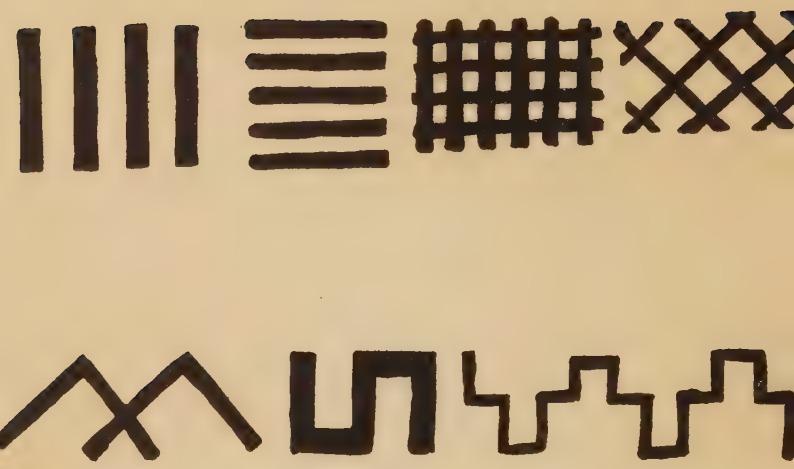
Pattern is the repetition of the same element or elements in a design.



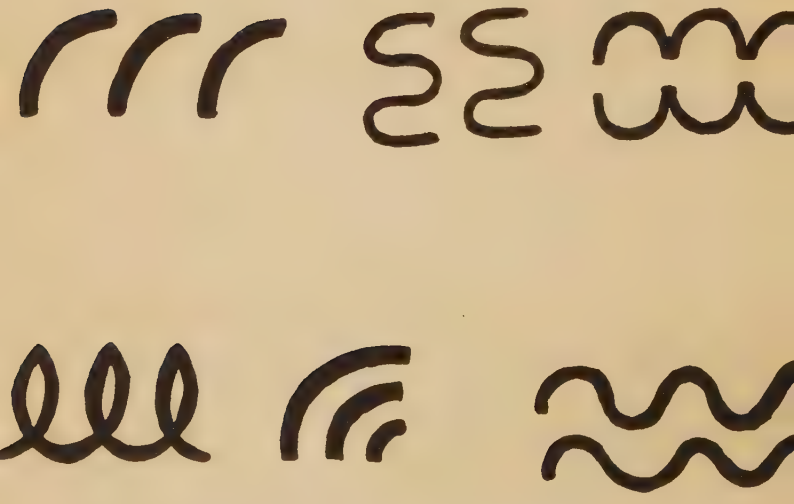
Repetition of dots to make a pattern.



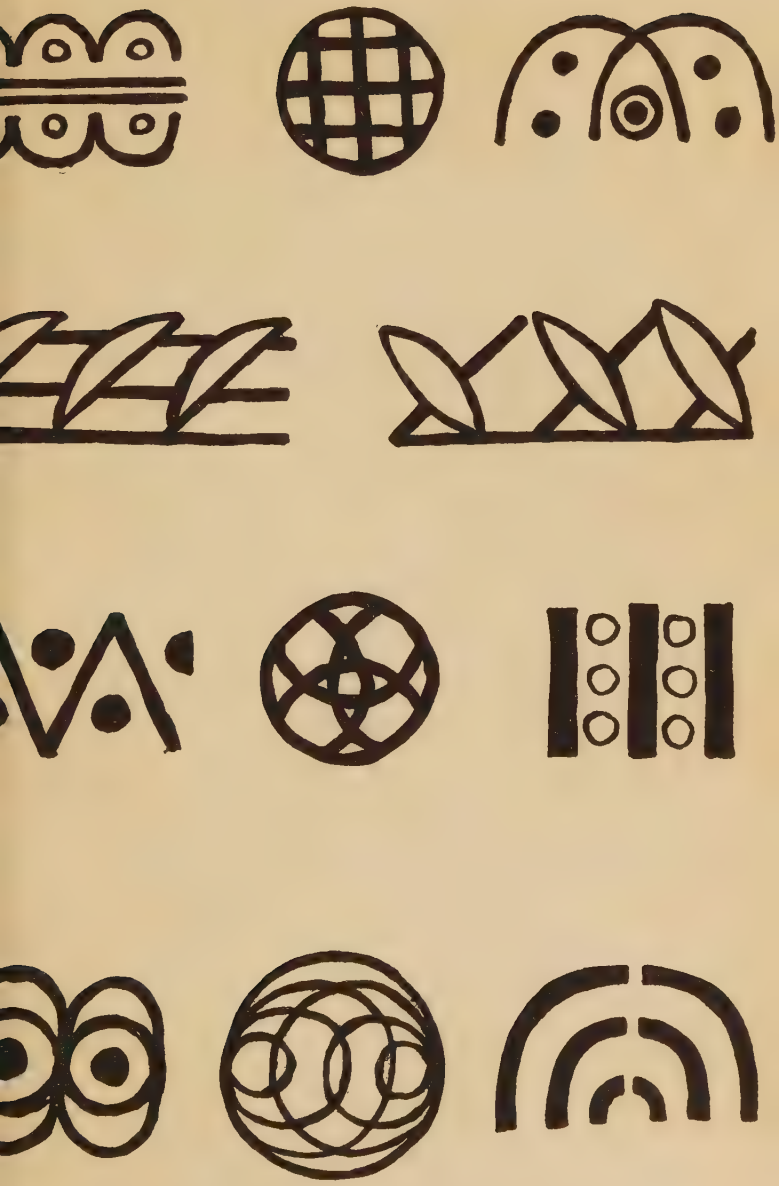
Repetition of circles to make a pattern.



Repetition of straight lines to make a pattern.



Repetition of curved lines to make a pattern.



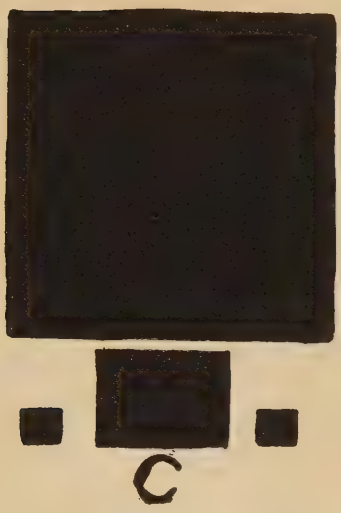
Combinations of dots, circles, straight lines and curved lines to make a simple varied pattern.

PROPORTION

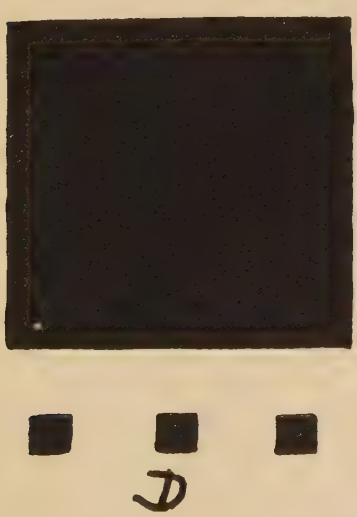
Proportion is the "just" relation of masses to one another.

A—*Correct relation of circular masses to make a just balance between the masses.*

B—*Incorrect relation of same masses.*



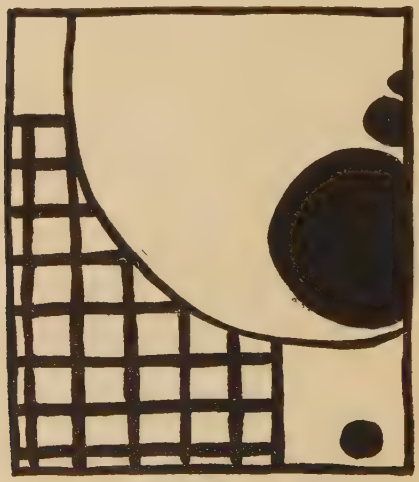
C—*Correct relation of square masses, showing relating mass.*



D—*Incorrect relation of square masses.*

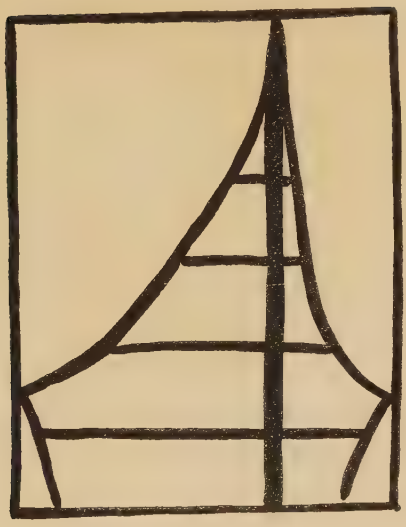
E

E—*Incorrect grouping of blacks and whites. The black, being heavy, "falls" to the left.*



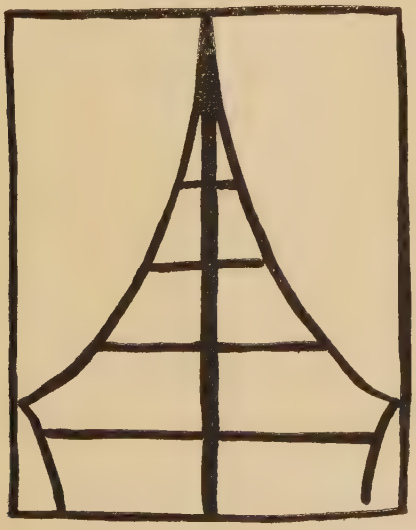
F

F—*Correct grouping of blacks and whites, showing the black evenly supporting itself.*



G

G—*Showing the uneven effect of a lack of symmetry.*

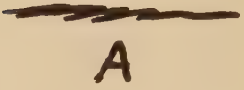


H

H—*A correct symmetrical design.*

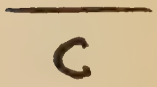
PROFILE

Profile is the quality of line used in a design. As the line varies, so does the whole character of a design. The same type of line should be maintained throughout a design.

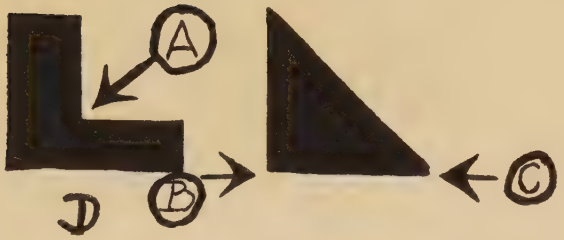


A—*A nervous, scratchy line.*

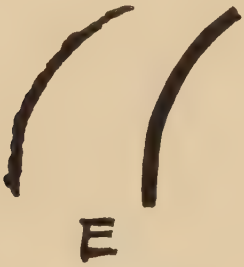
B—*A heavy, rough line.*



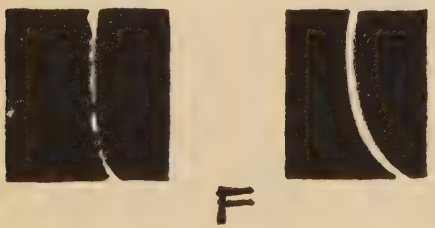
C—*A thin, sharp, precise line.*



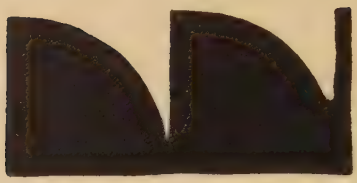
D—(a) *a sharp inside corner;* (b) *a sharp outside corner;* (c) *a blunted outside corner.*



E—*Rough and smooth lines.*

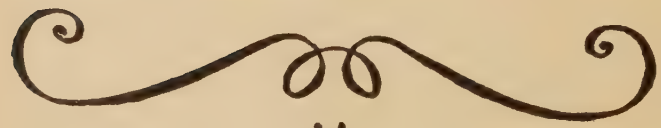


F—*A smooth line should be used with a smooth line. To mix the two types of line is to weaken the final effect of the design.*



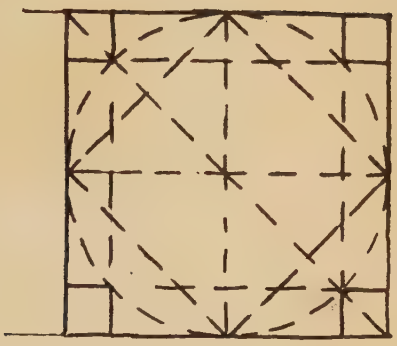
G

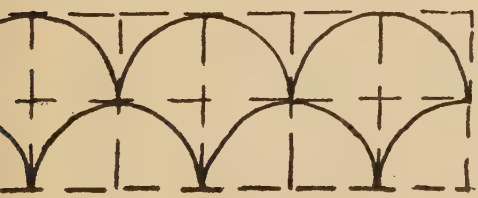
G—*A precise and a blunted tangent point between a straight line and a curve.*

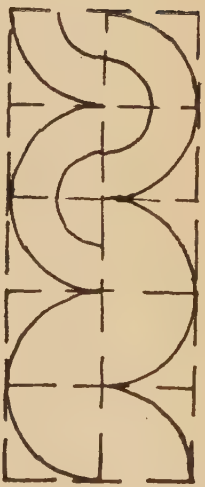


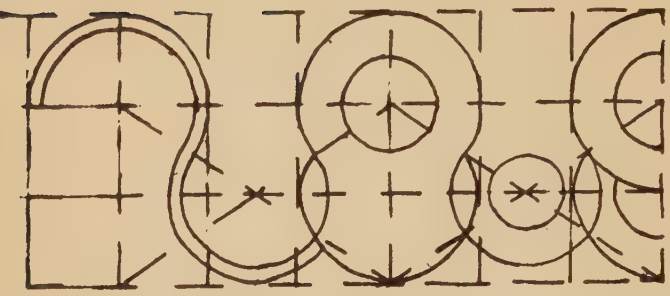
H

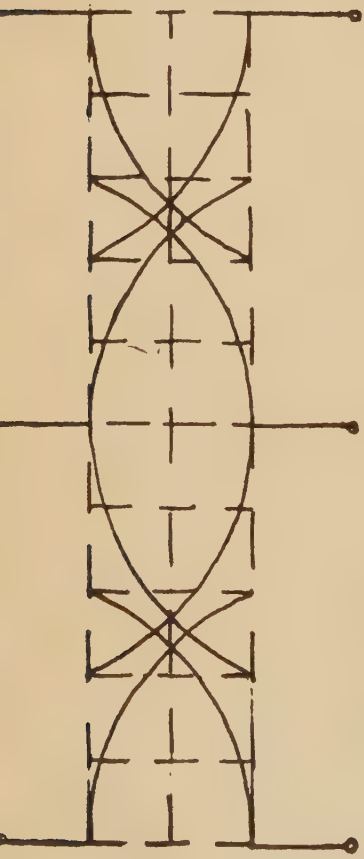
H—*An "accented" line, swelling here, tapering there, used mainly to gain a provoke of refinement and elegance in a design, much used in the 17th and 18th Century European design.*

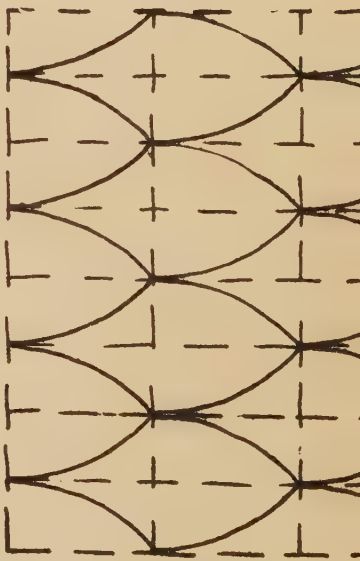


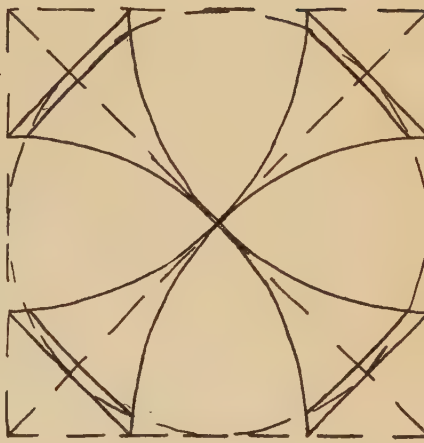


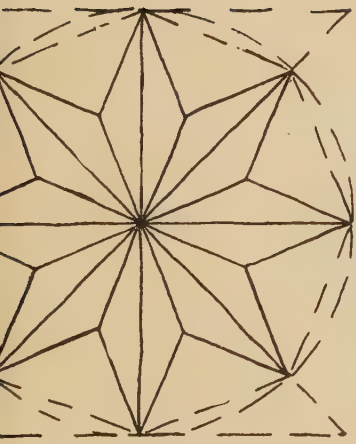


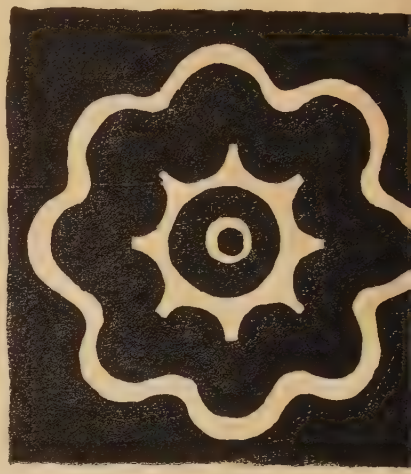




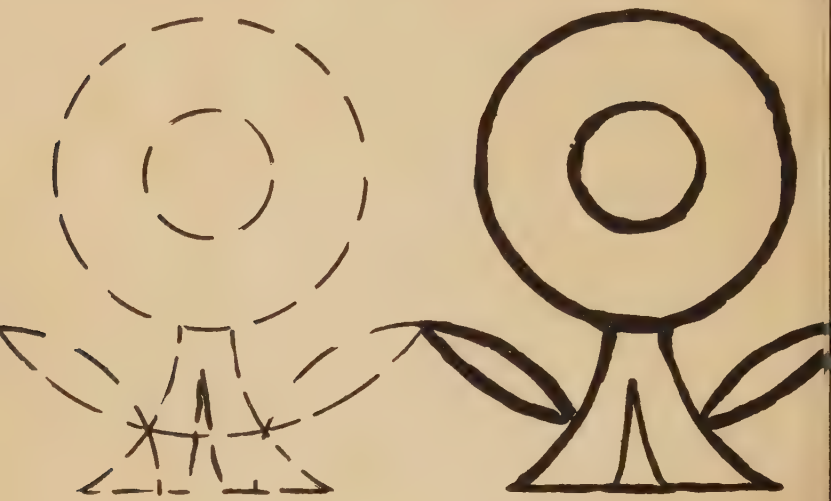


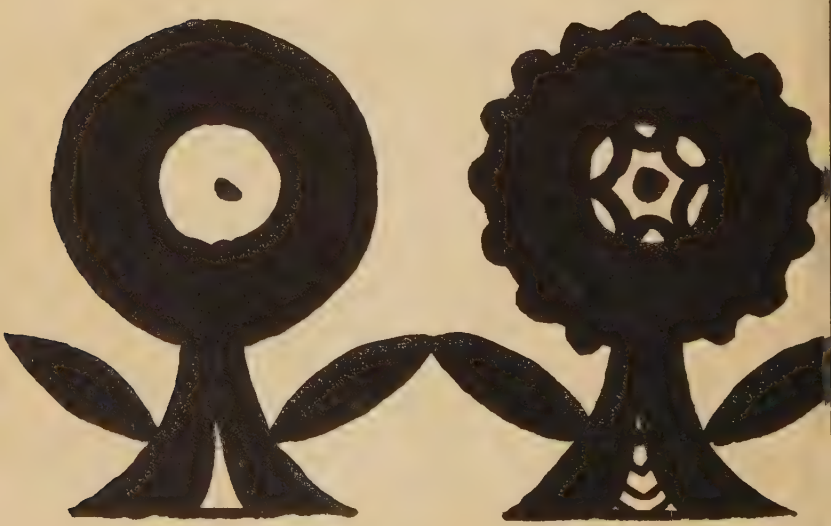




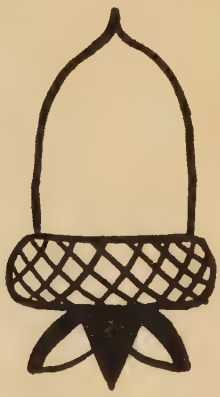


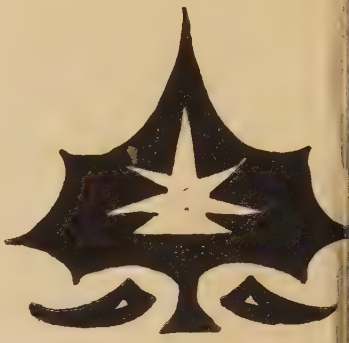
EVOLUTION OF A SIMPLE FLOWER DESIGN

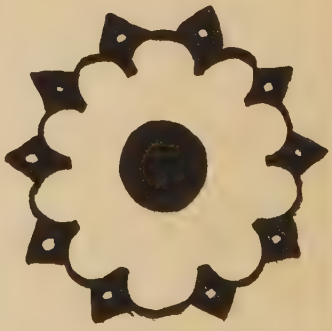


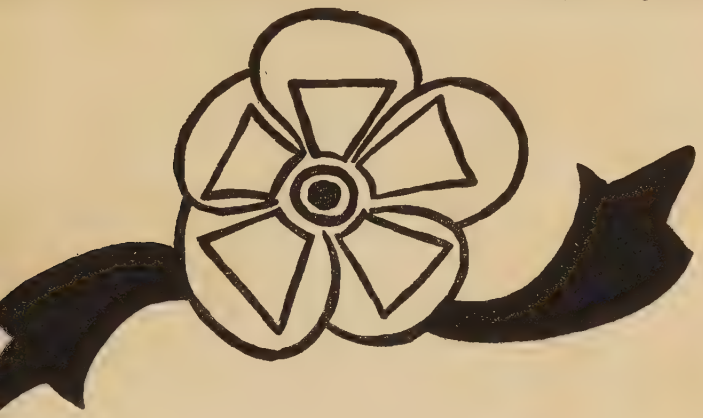


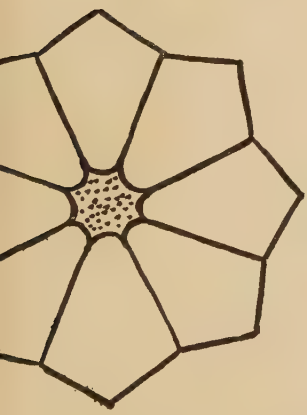
MOTIFS FROM FLOWER AND TREE FORM

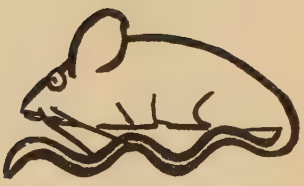






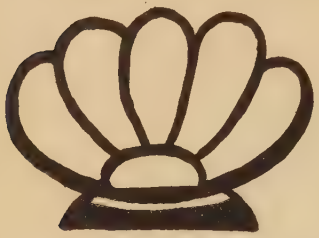


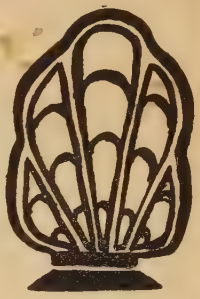


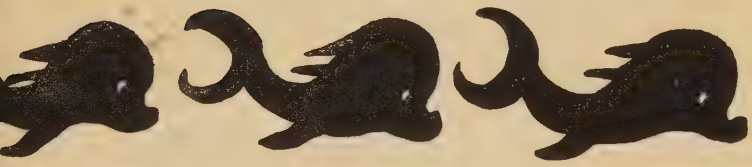


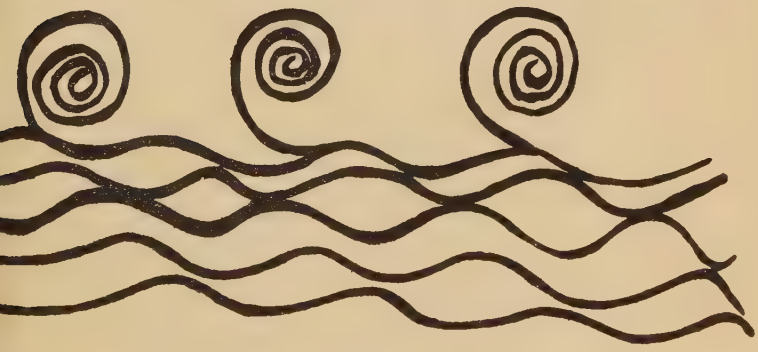
OTIFS FROM FISH AND SHELL FORMS

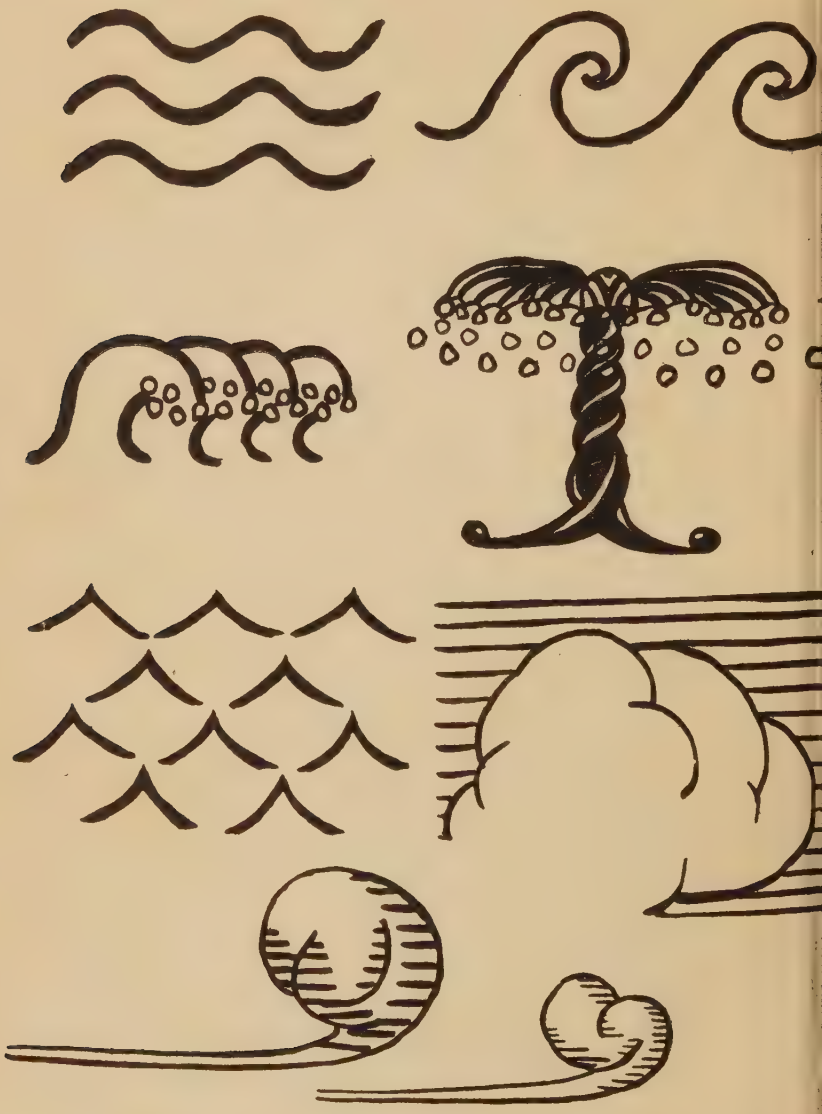
MOTIFS FROM FISH AND SHELL FORMS



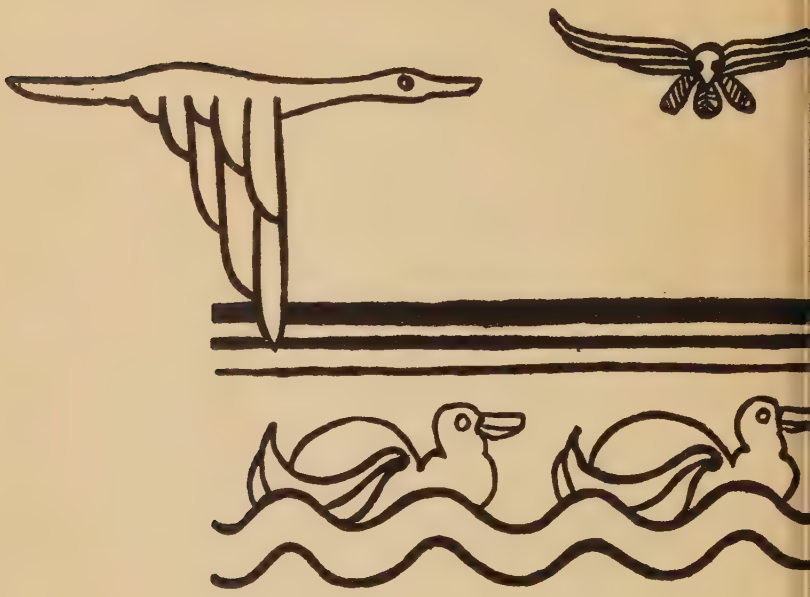


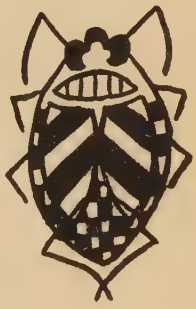


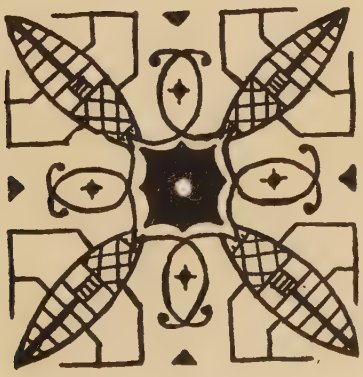


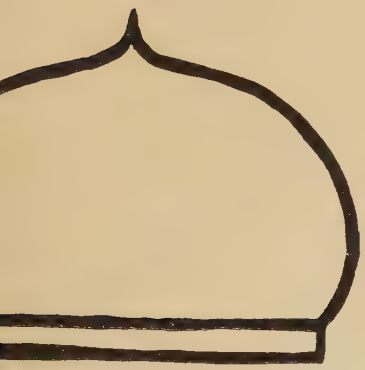


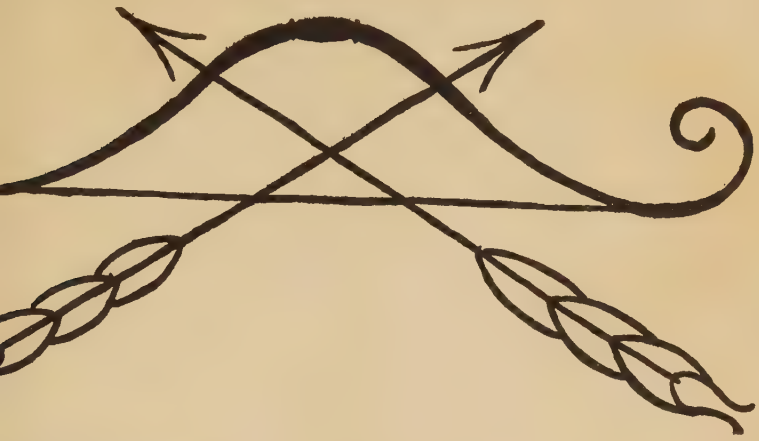
MOTIFS FROM BIRD FORMS

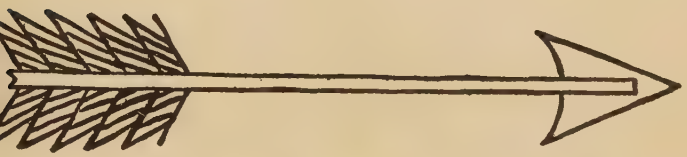


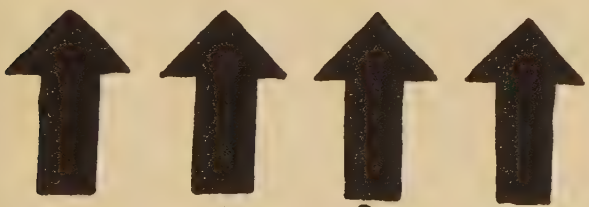


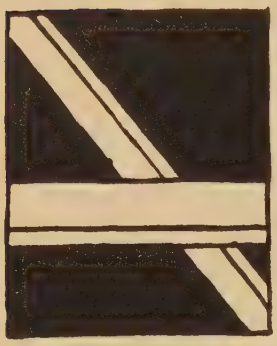
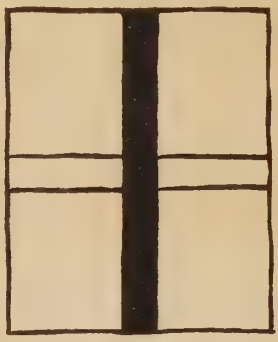
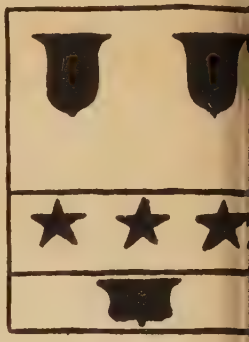
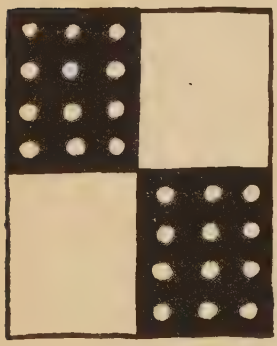
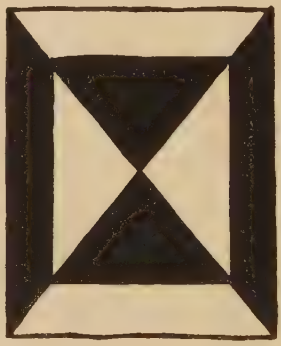
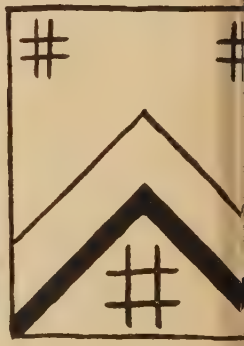


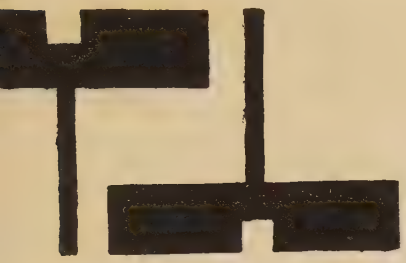


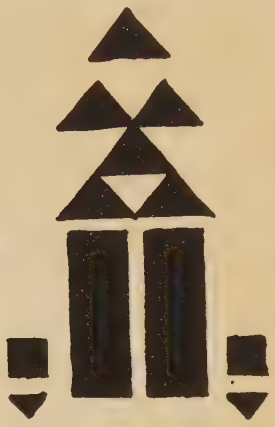


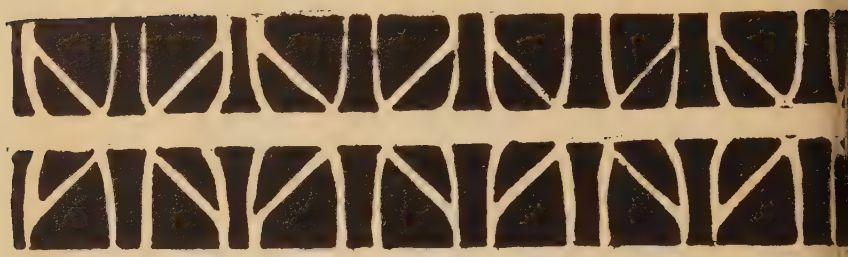


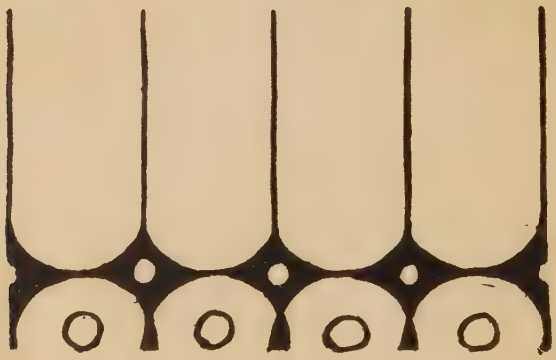


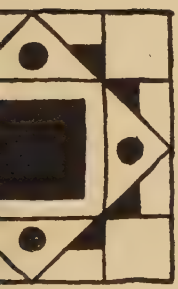







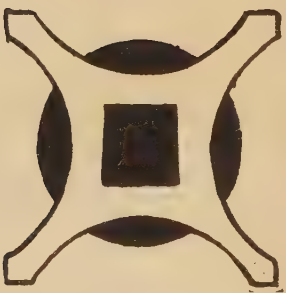












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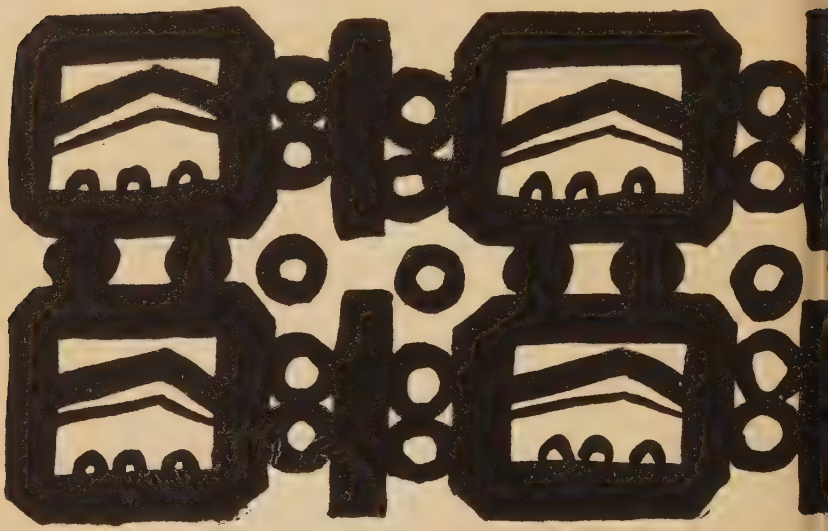

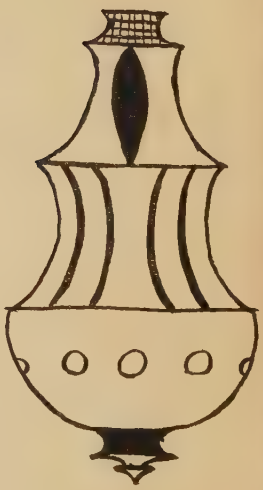

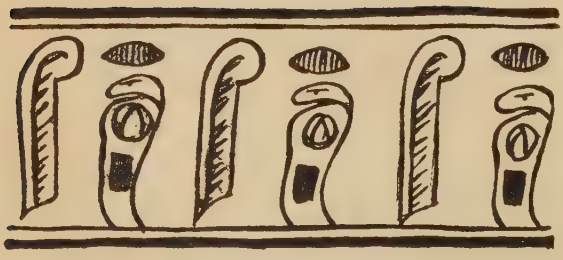

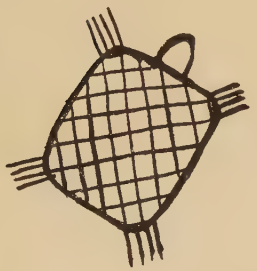

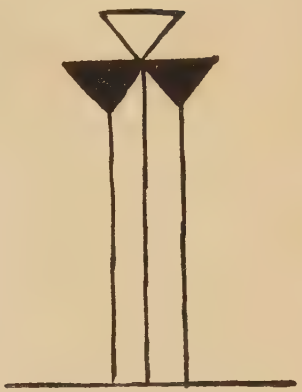

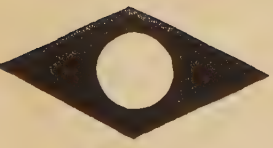

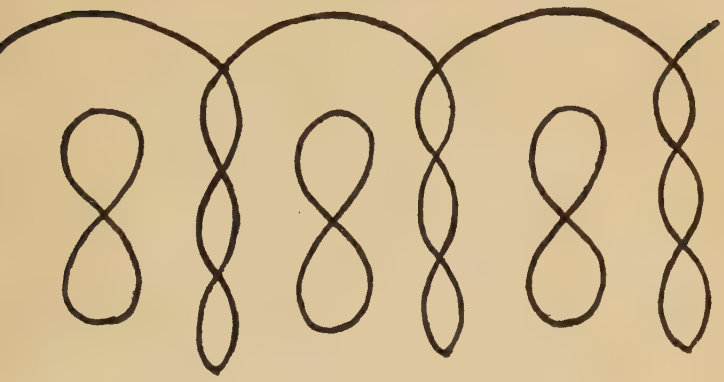

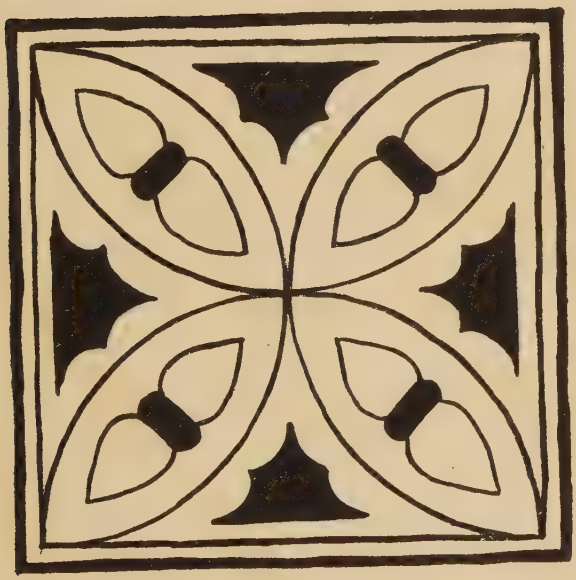

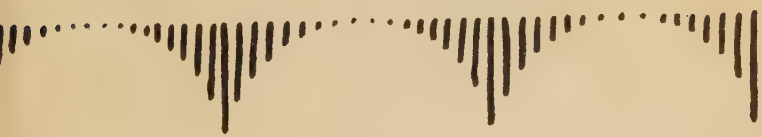

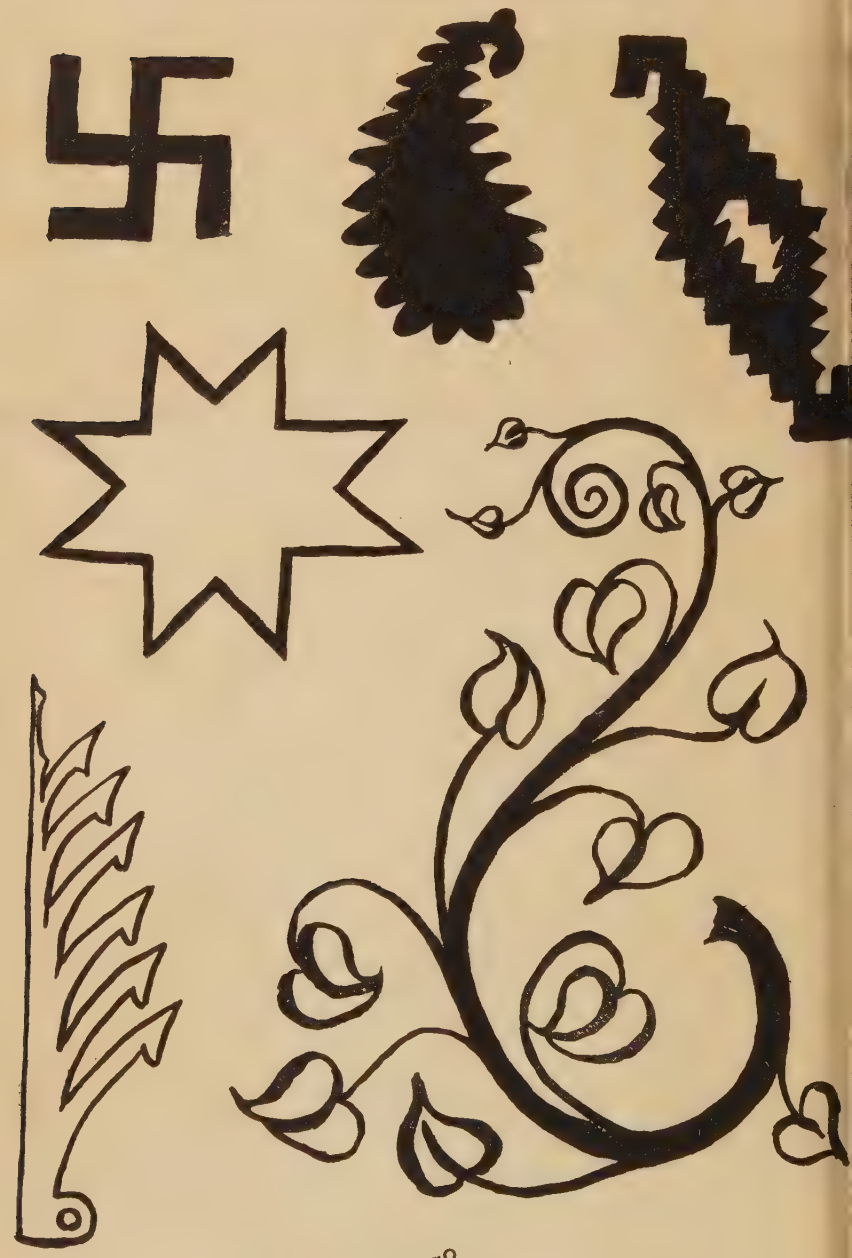

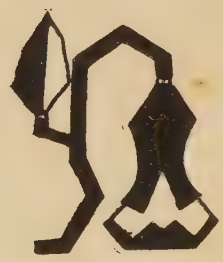

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